

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 04701 251553Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 /057 W
-----067352 252008Z /72

R 251436Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4093
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 4701

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MOPS, SY, EG, LY
SUBJECT: SYRIA NEUTRAL ON EGYPTIAN-LIBYAN CONFLICT

1. THE SYRIAN MEDIA HAVE BEEN GIVING NEUTRAL LOW-KEY TREATMENT TO LIBYAN AND EGYPTIAN MILITARY CLAIMS DURING THE FIGHTING WHILE SCRUPULOUSLY AVOIDING ANY PARTIALITY OR HINT OF SYRIAN INVOLVEMENT. FONMIN KHADDAM, IN INDONESIA JULY 24, CALLED ON OTHER ARAB STATES TO TAKE NECESSARY STEPS TO RESOLVE THE CRISIS. AT A RECEPTION FOR THE YUGOSLAVE AMBASSADOR JULY 24, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY WITNESSED EMOTIONAL EMBRACE BETWEEN LIBYAN AND EGYPTIAN AMBASSADORS. AL-BAATH, JULY 24, PUBLISHED THE LIBYAN CLAIM THAT TWO AMERICAN DRONES WERE SHOT DOWN OVER LIBYA. THE SAME STORY WAS PICKED UP BY KOL ISRAEL AND BROADCAST IN ARABIC. THERE HAS BEEN NO FOLLOW-UP ON THIS STORY AND NO PUBLIC ACCUSATIONS OF US INVOLVEMENT. NONETHELESS, SEVERAL OF OUR DIPLOMATIC COLLEAGUES HAVE PASSED ON PRIVATE SYRIAN COMMENTS TO THEM THAT "THE CIA MUST BE INVOLVED."

2. COMMENT: IF THE CIA DID NOT EXIST THE ARABS WOULD HAVE HAD TO INVENT IT. THEY ARE DISTRESSED BY
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ANY OVERT RUPTURE IN ARAB RANKS AND WANT TO ATTRIBUTE IT TO OUTSIDE FORCES. DO NOT CONSIDER THIS KNEE JERK REACTION TO HAVE SERIOUS IMPLICATIONS.
MURPHY

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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